

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 26-46 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1-25 are cancelled, and new claims 26-46 are presented. Support for new claims 26-46 can be found, for example, in the present specification at page 28, line 11 to page 39, line 18, and in original claims 1-25. No new matter is added. In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication in the Office Action that claims 23-25 recite allowable subject matter.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 1-16 as failing to comply with the written description and enablement requirements of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph. By this Amendment, claims 1-16 are cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claims 1-25 as indefinite under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. By this Amendment, claims 1-25 are cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102

A. Fujita

The Office Action rejects claims 1-6 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,302,487 to Fujita et al. ("Fujita"). By this Amendment, claims 1-6 and 17 are cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

B. Arnold

The Office Action rejects claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 3,462,196 to Arnold et al. ("Arnold"). By this Amendment, claim 18 is cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

A. Fujita

The Office Action rejects claim 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fujita. By this Amendment, claim 22 is cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

B. Fujita and Karg

The Office Action rejects claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fujita in view of U.S. Patent No. 2,633,184 to Karg ("Karg"). By this Amendment, claim 7 is cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

C. Fujita and Granger

The Office Action rejects claims 8 and 12-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fujita in view of U.S. Patent No. 199,535 to Granger ("Granger"). By this Amendment, claims 8 and 12-16 are cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

D. Fujita and Nakane

The Office Action rejects claims 9 and 10 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fujita in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0043002 to Nakane et al. ("Nakane"). By this Amendment, claims 9 and 10 are cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

E. Fujita, Nakane and Granger

The Office Action rejects claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fujita in view of Nakane and Granger. By this Amendment, claim 11 is cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

F. Fujita, Granger and Akizuki

The Office Action rejects claims 19-22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Fujita in view of Granger and U.S. Patent No. 5,490,718 to Akizuki et al. ("Akizuki"). By this Amendment, claims 19-22 are cancelled, rendering the rejection moot.

New Claims

A. Claims 26-28

New claim 26 is an independent claim corresponding in scope to original claim 23, as depending from original claims 17 and 22. While the Office Action indicates that original claim 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §101 and 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph (*see* Office Action, page 13), the Office Action does not include grounds for rejection of claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. §101 or 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Accordingly, new claim 26 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

New claims 27 and 28 depend from new claim 26 and, thus, are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

B. Claims 29-31

New claim 29 is an independent claim corresponding in scope to original claim 23, as depending from original claims 18 and 22. While the Office Action indicates that original claim 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §101 and 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph (*see* Office Action, page 13), the Office Action does not include grounds for rejection of claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. §101 or 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Accordingly, new claim 29 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

New claims 30 and 31 depend from new claim 29 and, thus, are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

C. Claims 32-36

New claim 32 is an independent claim corresponding in scope to original claim 23, as depending from original claims 19 and 22. While the Office Action indicates that original claim 23 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and amended to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §101 and 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph (*see* Office Action, page 13), the Office Action does not include grounds for rejection of claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. §101 or 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Accordingly, new claim 32 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

New claims 33-36 depend from new claim 32 and, thus, are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

D. Claims 37-46

New claim 37 corresponds in scope to original claim 1. However, new claim 37 is drafted to include concrete structural language in place of the functional language relating to tension fields in original claim 1.

Claim 37 recites "[a] seat comprising: a frame; and a sheet of a cloth spring material; wherein: a front end portion of the sheet is attached along its length to a front portion of the frame; a rear end portion of the sheet is attached along its length to a rear portion of the frame; the front portion of the frame is provided so that the front portion of the frame and the front end portion of the sheet remain fixed in location when the seat is in use; the rear portion of the frame comprises a connecting portion and a torsion bar, the connecting portion being rotatable about the torsion bar; and the rear end portion of the sheet is attached to the connecting portion so that the rear end portion of the sheet and the connecting portion rotate about the torsion bar against a torsional load of the torsion bar when the seat is in use" (emphasis added). None of the cited references disclose or suggest such a feature.

While each of Fujita, Arnold, Karg, Granger, Nakane and Akizuki are directed to seats, none of the seats of the cited references includes a frame having a rear portion including a connecting portion and a torsion bar. In the seat of claim 37, a connecting portion is rotatable about a torsion bar, a rear end portion of a flexible sheet is attached to the connecting portion, and the connecting portion and rear end portion of the flexible sheet rotate about the torsion bar against a torsional load of the torsion bar when the seat is in use. The cited references do not disclose or suggest such an arrangement.

The only cited reference disclosing features remotely analogous to the arrangement described above is Akizuki. Akizuki discloses an arrangement in which a rigid cushion panel 30 is connected to a rigid cushion frame 32 via a rear linking member 68 that is attached to a tension spring 66. See Akizuki, column 9, line 59 to column 10, line 22; FIG. 4. However,

the arrangement of Akizuki does not include a torsion bar and the cushion panel in the seat of Akizuki is not a sheet of a cloth spring material, a required by claim 37. The structures in the seat of Akizuki and the principle of operation of such seat are vastly different from those of the seat of claim 37. Akizuki, either alone or in combination with the other cited references, fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature of claim 37.

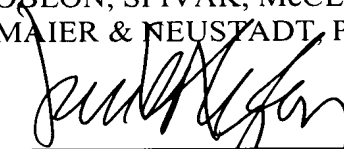
Accordingly, claim 37 is believed to be patentable over the cited references. Claims 38-46 depend from claim 37 and, thus, are also believed to be patentable over the cited references.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 26-46 are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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